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Amateur radio involves a passion for community service and technology experiments to extend the limits of technology. Our routine activities should reflect favorably upon our host-licensing nation. We are each licensed ambassadors to a worldwide audience. Our exams should reflect and emphasize these objectives.

I had to demonstrate CW proficiency at 5, 13 and 20 words per minute to obtain and upgrade my various amateur radio license(s). These efforts delayed my upgrades to higher classes of licensing. Making CW optional would tend to remove an obstacle to the pursuit of the best traits of many aspiring amateur radio enthusiasts.

CW is less popular than when I first was licensed nearly 40 years ago. Many licensees today use voice and data mode modes exclusively. Offering optional CW endorsement(s) for those who do demonstrate proficiency would tend to award those who took the time to achieve CW proficiency – thus appeasing the existing licensees.

Despite the popularity of voice and computer type digital transmission modes, CW is far from dead in the Amateur Radio community. Here are a few reasons, which continue to legitimize the need for CW:

1. Simple technology radio equipment – often depends upon CW. Such equipment is currently in use for portable and low power operation.
2. CW is a part of station ID activities. Use of most voice repeaters on VHF and above often use a CW identifier to comply with periodic station ID for the repeater system.
3. Digital computer interfaces and related equipment aids those without CW proficiency to utilize CW modes via a keyboard and monitor display.
4. A widespread power outage could cause most repeater systems to be inoperative fairly quickly. In an emergency, one can create a CW HF station from parts more quickly than for voice modes. Equipment can be built that is not dependant upon computers and represents the first means of communications.

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